

Message Text

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21 11

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 CU-04 USIE-00 OMB-01 EB-11

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 ACDA-19 IO-14 /125 W

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R 300651Z NOV 73

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9768

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

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JOINT STATE/USIS MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: STUDENT RIOTS IN PUNJAB

1. IN MOST SERIOUS STUDENT DISTURBANCES THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT SINCE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1972 STUDENT PROTEST OVER RECOGNITION BANGLADESH AND SUBSEQUENT IMPOSITION SECTION 144, STUDENTS IN ALL MAJOR CITIES PUNJAB DEMONSTRATED YESTERDAY IN PROTEST OF KILLING GOVERNMENT COLLEGE MULTAN STUDENT NOVEMBER 28TH. DEATH MULTAN STUDENT WAS RESULT CLASH BETWEEN RIOTING STUDENTS ROVT. COLLEGE MULTAN AND POLICE OVER DISPUTE REGARDING CON-
CESSIONAL BUS FARES FOR STUDENTS.

2. IN WIDESPREAD NOVEMBER 29TH STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS LAHORE, SAHIAAL, SARGHODA, BA DWALPUR, SIALKOT, LYALLPUR, BUSES WERE

COMMANDEERED AND DAMAGED, PRIVATE VEHICLES STONED, FLOWER POTS IN FRONT OF DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS DESTROYED JDD SEVERAL DISTRICT OFFICIALS HARRASSED APPARENTLY WITH INJURIES TO SOME. LAHORE DEMONSTRATIONS WITNESSED BY USIS LOCAL WHO ESTIMATED STUDENT CROWD AT OVER 2000.

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3. POLICE REACTION TO INITIAL MULTAN INCIDENT PROMPT AND FIRM. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO REPORTS AVAILABLE THEIR HANDLING OF WIDESPREAD DISTURBANCES YESTERDAY MODERATE WITH OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO DAMPEN EMOTIONAL ATMOSPHERE.

4. PROTEST PRIMARILY AGAINST INCREASING COSTS STUDENT TRANSPORTATION BUT IN SIALKOT PROCESSION INCLUDED HUNDRED WOMEN PROTESTING INADEQUATE SUPPLY AND HIGH COST KEROSENE AND OTHER ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES.

5. CHIEF MINISTER KHAR IN THURSDAY EVENING PRESS STATEMENT "ADVISED" STUDENTS TO DESIST FROM ACTS OF VANDALISM, ANNOUNCED APPOINTMENT HIGH COURT JUSTICE ASLAM RIAZ HUSSAIN TO HOLD ENQUIRY MULTAN INCIDENT AND IMPOSED SECTION 144 ON LAHORE, MULTAN, SAHIWAL, GUJRANWALA AND LYALLPUR. HE HAS ALSO CONFINED POLICE DIRECTLY INVOLVED MULTAN INCIDENT TO BARRACKS AND PROMISED STUDENTS PROMPT AND THOROUGH ENQUIRY.

6. MULTAN INCIDENT APPARENTLY TIP OF ICEBERG REFLECTING WIDESPREAD FRUSTRATION OVER RISING PRICES OF MASS TRANSPORT AND GROWING SHORTAGES AND HIGH COSTS OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES. INCIDENT SEIZED UPON BY ISLAMA JAMIAT-E-TULEBA, WELL-ORGANIZED STUDENT ARMY OF JAMAT-I-ISLAMI GROUP WHICH HAS JUST WON LAND-SLIDE STUDENT UNION VICTORIES AT THE TWO MAJOR UNIVERSITIES THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT -- PUNJAB AND ENGINEERING. WE BELIEVE STUDENTS ARE ACCURATELY REFLECTING ATTITUDE THEIR PARENTS. THOUGH GOVERNMENT WELL ABLE CONTROL PRESENT AGITATION, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST AND THIS PUBLIC PROTEST MAY ENCOURAGE OTHER DISSATISFIED ELEMENTS AND MAY BE FORE-RUNNER OF SIMILAR OUTBURSTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LAHORE01450
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LAHORE JOINT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973113/aaaaabqv.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07-Jan-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STUDENT RIOTS IN PUNJAB
TAGS: PINT, PK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005